

REMARKS

Claims 3-22 and 24-56, 58, 59-61, and 63-78 are presently pending in this application. Claims 3-6, 8, 11, 17, 22, 24-26, 33, 34, 39-41, 54, 55, 57, 58, 61, 63, 66, 67, 70, and 78 have been amended. More specifically, claims 17, 61, and 78 have been amended to clarify certain features of these claims to expedite prosecution of this application, and without disclaimer of or prejudice to pursuing the subject matter of these claims in unamended or other forms in a continuation or other application. Claim 63 has been rewritten in independent form to include all the features of the corresponding base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 3-6, 8, 11, 22, 24-26, 33, 34, 39-41, 54, 55, 57, 58, 66, 67, and 70 have been amended to change the dependencies of these claims and/or improve the readability of these claims, and not for any reasons related to patentability. Claims 1, 2, 57, 59, and 62 have been cancelled without commenting on or conceding the merits of the outstanding rejections. As such, these claims have been cancelled without prejudice to pursuing these claims in a continuation, divisional, or other application. New claims 79-82 have been added.

In the Office Action mailed August 7, 2008 and the Advisory Action mailed November 18, 2008, pending claims 1-22, 24-37, 39-47, 49-52, 55, and 57-78 were rejected. More specifically, the status of the application in light of this Office Action is as follows:

(A) Claims 1-22, 24-37, 39-47, 49-52, 55, and 57-78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,470,450 to Langford et al. ("Langford"); and

(B) Claims 38, 48, 53, 54, and 56 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

The undersigned attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for engaging in telephone conferences on September 17, 2008 and November 21, 2008 to discuss the present Office Action, the Langford reference, and the pending claims. The applicant requests that this paper constitute the applicant's Interview Summary. If the Examiner

notices any deficiencies with this paper in this regard, she is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney to correct such deficiencies.

The following remarks summarize and expand upon the results of the September 17th and November 21st telephone conferences, and they also reflect the agreements reached between the undersigned attorney and the Examiner during the telephone conference. For example, the following remarks reflect the Examiner's acknowledgement that new claims 79-82 are allowable and proposed amendments to claims 17, 61, 63, and 78 would put these claims in condition for allowance. Claims 17, 61, 63, and 78 have been so amended and, accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of these claims and the claims depending therefrom should be withdrawn.

A. Response to the Section 102 Rejection of Claims 1-22, 24-37, 39-47, 49-52, 55 and 57-78 (Langford)

Claims 1-22, 24-37, 39-47, 49-52, 55, and 57-78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Langford. Claims 1, 2, 57, 59, and 62 have been cancelled and, accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of these claims is now moot. As stated above, the Examiner acknowledged during the September 17th and November 21st telephone conferences that new claim 79 is allowable. Claims 3-16, 22, 24-56, 58, and 60 are allowable as depending from allowable base claim 79, and also because of the additional features of these dependent claims. Accordingly, the Section 103 rejection of claims 3-16, 22, 24-56, 58, and 60 should be withdrawn.

Claims 17, 61, 63, and 78, as amended, include several features generally similar to those of allowable claim 79. Accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of claims 17, 61, 63, and 78 and the claims depending therefrom (claims 18-21 and 64-77) should be withdrawn.

B. Allowable Claims

The applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 38, 48, 53, 54, and 56 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 38 has been rewritten in the stated form as new claim 80, claims 53 and 54 have been combined and rewritten in


the stated form as new claim 81, and claim 56 has been rewritten in the stated form as new claim 82. Accordingly, claims 80-82 are in condition for allowance. Claims 38, 48, 53, 54, and 56 have not been rewritten in independent form because their respective base claim (claim 79) should now be in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed above. Accordingly, the objection to claims 38, 48, 53, 54, and 56 should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the applied art. The applicants accordingly request reconsideration of the application and a mailing of a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Aaron J. Poledna at (206) 359-3982.

Respectfully submitted,
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